

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-06 CU-02 ACDA-07 SCA-01 IO-13 OMB-01 TRSE-00
/082 W

-----241420Z 020827 /41

R 241200Z MAY 77
FM AMEMBASSY PRAGUE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2741
INFO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE
AMEMBASSY BERLIN
AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST
AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY SOFIA
AMEMBASSY WARSAW

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E.O. 111652: N/A
TAGS: PFOR, CZ
SUBJECT: MEDIA ATTACKS INCREASINGLY AIMED AT PRESIDENT CARTER

REF STATE 11479; PRAGUE 1334

1. IN SPITE OF (PERHAPS, BECAUSE OF) PROTESTS ON CZECHOSLOVAK MEDIA
TREATMENT OF U.S., OVER THE PAST WEEKEND ATTACKS ON U.S. INTENSIFIED.
THE EARLIER CAUTION IN CRITICIZING PRESIDENT CARTER HAS NOW BEEN
DROPPED AND HE HAS BECOME THE PRIME TARGET FOR ATTACK.

2. THE PRESIDENT'S STANCE ON HUMAN RIGHTS HAS OCCASIONED THE MOST
VIRULENT ATTACKS, INCLUDING A 15-MINUTE TV SPECIAL IN PRIME
TIME MAY 21, STARRING FORMER RUDE PRAVO WASHINGTON CORRESPONDENT
DUSAN ROVENSKY AND TV NEWSCASTER OLDRICH VEJVODA (ASSUME FBIS
WILL HAVE TEXT). SPECIAL INCLUDED FILM CLIPS, SOME QUITE OLD,
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DEPICTING VIOLATIONS IN THE U.S. OF EVERY IMAGINABLE HUMAN RIGHT,
INTERSPERSED WITH OTHER CLIPS, USUALLY UNFLATTERING, OF PRESIDENT
CARTER. THEME WAS "CLEAN UP YOUR OWN HOUSE BEFORE CRITICIZING
OTHERS" BUT PRODUCTION WAS DESIGNED TO GIVE IMPRESSION THAT PRESIDENT
IS RESPONSIBLE FOR ALL VIOLATIONS OF RIGHTS IN U.S.

3. GABRIEL CASE CONTINUES TO PREOCCUPY MEDIA. BASIC SLANT IS

THAT PRESIDENT CARTER HAS THE POWER, IF HE WANTED TO USE IT, TO REUNITE MOTHER AND CHILD. CARTOON IN DIKOBRAZ SHOWS PRESIDENT DISCARDING LETTER ABOUT GABRIEL CASE, SAYING "WE DONT READ OPEN LETTERS. WE ADHERE STRICTLY TO CONFIDENTIALITY OF THE MAIL."

4. ANOTHER ISSUE ON WHICH U.S. AND PRESIDENT CARTER ARE UNDER CONTINUING ATTACK IS LEVEL OF DEFENSE BUDGET AND ENCOURAGEMENT TO NATO ALLIES TO INCREASE DEFENSE EXPENDITURES. PRESIDENT IS ACCUSED OF BREAKING CAMPAIGN PROMISE TO CUT DEFENSE SPENDING AND OF SCHEMING TO INVALIDATE SALT BY PERMITTING CONTINUED DEVELOPMENT OF B-1 BOMBER, ETC.

5. COMMENT: THE CZECHOSLOVAK MEDIA CAMPAIGN AGAINST THE U.S. IS OBVIOUSLY PART OF THE GENERAL WP PRE-BELGRADE COUNTER-ATTACK AGAINST WESTERN CRITICISM, BUT WE FIND NOTEWORTHY THE RECENT INCREASE IN ITS INTENSITY. WE HAVE OBSERVED A MARKED DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THESE ATTACKS AND THE MORE FACTUAL AND BALANCED REPORTING IN LOCAL MEDIA ON THE GROMYKO-VANCE TALKS IN GENEVA. BYRNE

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